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YOU BE THE CRITIC

The column where readers have their say

Here is another selection of your letters. We would remind you that written comments should be made on one side of the paper (preferably typed) and should include your name and address. All letters are read, but due to pressure of space, not all can be printed. Please note that letters may be condensed at the editor's discretion. Send them to: *You Be The Critic, Entertainments Dept., The Gazette, P.O. Box 6036, Montreal H3C 3E2*

Piaf show: A sad excuse for a script

I have just seen the final show of the Centaur subscription season, and what a "show" it was too! In fact everything surrounding *Piaf* — its history, right up to the reviews, has been somewhat of a spectacle in its own right.

It began with a proper tournament of "Author, Author, Who's Got the Author!" When I went to see the last show at Centaur, my program told me that Timothy Findlay wrote the play; a poster on the wall said no, it was by a man named Charlebois, and the ushers I spoke to weren't quite sure who wrote or would write *Piaf*. As it turned out, Pauline LeBel, the actress in the show, and Daniel Roussel, the director, wrote the text for *Piaf*.

And this is my point. I don't know what Messrs. Findlay or Charlebois would have come up with, but anything would have been better than the rather sad excuse for a script presented in the *Piaf* show. I have read Findlay's book and was interested to see what he would do with the material, but alas, something happened to him!

I heard somewhere that Charlebois was a young, award-winning playwright from Montreal, and thereupon became interested in what he might do with the material, but here, again, I was not rewarded. All I finally got were some mindless critics telling us that Pauline LeBel was not Edith Piaf, and missing what I feel is *the* issue with this Centaur show.

I would like to pretend that the two authors involved (Findlay and Charlebois) in this escapade withdrew so that they would not have to sell out what little is left of Canadian theatre to blatant and ugly commercialism! And that, Ms. Peterson, is what is rearing its head at Centaur!

Ms. LeBel is marvellous! The set is gorgeous! And again, the critics have missed Mr. Hawkins' splendid lighting, which, because they are not critics, they have missed all year!

Robin L. Hecates
Montreal

Rod: Rodriguez is right

I am writing on the subject of all the comments printed regarding the Rod Stewart concert review by Juan Rodriguez (May 10). Readers are right when they say Rod is a great performer, an entertainer at heart and a people-pleaser . . . but as far as putting Juan down for his review is something totally different — an accusation that reveals itself somewhat harsh.

Rodriguez has been around for a little while now; being a big Stewart fan, I remember "back then" when Juan used to compliment (even glorify) Rod's work. Sure, the man put on a good show, but he is straying from his roots, something long-time loyal Stewart fans have noticed with the release of his album *Blondes Have More Fun* and his current N.A. tour.

Juan Rodriguez is an excellent critic (though half the time I disagree with him). He's got experience and, mostly, good judgment; this guy knows what he's talking about — what he says always has something behind it (motion/reason) . . . nothing is unfounded or unjustified.

Jean Baillargeon
Pierrefonds

Cruel, wounding review

In response to Bruce Bailey's review of the 'Y' show (May 25), I can only say that it was one of the worst pieces of reviewing I ever had the misfortune to read.

Mr. Bailey seems to delight in his acerbic wit rather than give us an honest, straightforward criticism.

Many of his comments had validity, but the manner in which he chose to write was cruel and wounding. This was an honest effort by a group of volunteer amateurs to provide enjoyment and amusement for the audience and provide it they did.

Mr. Bailey's review was merciless, his wit was caustic, and his obvious delight in tearing apart the production was a discredit to the profession of reviewers.

Mrs. Bernice Rothfleisch
Laval

WE loved your show!

It was most unfair and unjust of Bruce Bailey to criticize such a fine group of housewives and businessmen who spent too much time and effort putting together *Those Were The Days* (May 25).

My husband and I and a few others attended the opening night and found the show completely delightful and most entertaining. We did not expect professional entertainment. But we felt there is good talent among our amateurs.

The complete performance left us in a happy frame of mind, which most movies and shows today do not. Our $6 each for a ticket was money well spent and all I can add is to say to this wonderful cast: keep up the good work. Many people loved your show.

Mrs. R. Olshansky
St. Laurent

Book review shallow

They say there are particularly two kinds of evil in the world today — ignorance and arrogance.

I am, of course, referring to the completely unwarranted and bitterly scathing evaluation of *Pocket Man* (by Don Bell) in the May 12 issue of your newspaper by your hopefully now defunct book editor Marian Strachan.

I have read *Pocket Man*, and, deplorably enough, it is crystal clear from her shallow and unattuned analysis that Ms. Strachan is much more interested in glory hunting at Stephen Leacock Award Winner Don Bell's expense than she is in presenting an objective and intelligent appraisal of a terrific and humorous little book dealing in what might be termed "the Universal Orientation".

David Greenacre
Montreal

WHAT'S ON WEEKEND

CLUBS

Le Bistro d'en Haut, 4880 Sherbrooke St. W. **Tonight & Sat.:** Gilles Losier, Acadian fiddler.

The Maples, 121 Lakeshore Rd. in Pointe Claire. **Tonight through Sun.:** Charity Brown. Fri. & Sat., $2.50. 694-2479.

Hotel Nelson Grill, 425 Place Jacques Cartier in Old Montreal. **Sat.:** The Montreal New Wave Festival featuring Alan Lord & The Bew Genes, Heaven 17, Lorne Ranger and Go, The Eighties, Men Without Hats and The Electric Vomit. Admission $3. 861-5731.

The Mustache, 1445 Closse St. **Fri. through Sun.:** Silk & Steel. 931-2575.

Rising Sun, 286 St. Catherine St. W. **Tonight through Sun:** Sonny Stitt. Doors open at 8 p.m. 861-0657.

L'Air du Temps, 191 St. Paul St. W. in Old Montreal. **Tonight & Sat.:** Steve Holt & Company. **Sun.:** Bernard Primeau. **Sat. & Sun. afternoon:** Joanne Deforge.

L'Impreveu, Hotel Iroquois, 446 Place Jacques-Cartier in Old Montreal. **Tonight through Sun.:** Syncope. 878-9397.

Yellow Door, 3625 Aylmer St. **Tonight & Sat.:** Wassail.

Rainbow Bar & Grill, 1430 Stanley St. **Sun.:** Duke Walker. 849-8262.

Club 406, 1500 De Maisonneuve Blvd. E. Jazz "In Concert" every Fri. night. Free admission. Doors open at 8 p.m. 527-3927.

Boite a Chansons, Meridien Hotel, 4 Complexe Desjardins. **Tonight through June 17:** Isabelle Aubret. Showtimes: 9 p.m. Sun.; 9 p.m. & 11:30 p.m., Fri., Sat. Reservations: 285-1450.

St. James Pub, 2025 Drummond St. **Tonight & Sat.:** Firefly. First set at 9:30 p.m. Admission charge Fri. and Sat. 861-4662.

The Hunter's Horn, 1214 Peel St. **Tonight & Sat.:** The Clahanes. **Sun.:** Peter Suttis. 861-6022.

St. James Pub, 1197 University St. **Tonight & Sat.:** 9 p.m. Darby Williams. 861-8022.

Cock & Bull Pub, 1944 St. Catherine St. W. Al Peter's Jazz Band plays Dixieland music every Sun. from 9 p.m. 933-4556.

THEATRE

Montreal Co-Op Theatre presents *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, music by Clark Gesner and book by John Gordon. Cast includes: Anne Barnes, Rosanne Cabana, Greg Campbell, Ellen Cohen, Gregg Ernst, Judah Katz and Wendy Sondon. Tonight & Sat., 8 p.m. Vanier College CEGEP, 5160 Decarie Blvd. Tickets $3, students and senior citizens $2. 333-4071, weekdays; 486-7244 weekends after 5 p.m.

Theatre du Nouveau Monde, 84 St. Catherine St. W. presents Denise Boucher's *Les Fees Ont Soif*. Cast includes: Louisette Dussault, Sophie Clement and Michele Magny. Fri., noon to 8 p.m., Sat., noon to 9 p.m. and Sun., noon to 7 p.m. 861-0563.

Theatre du Rideau Vert, 4664 St. Denis St. Jean-Christain Grinvald's adaptation of Barrie Keefe's *Gotcha* with Lothaire Bluteau, Louise Latraverse, Denis Mercier and Francois Cartier. Tonight & Sat. Tickets $5.75. 844-1793.

L'Eskabel, 2334 Centre St., presents Marguerite Duras' *India Song*. Tonight through Sun., Shows at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are $4. Call for reservations, 931-8401, 931-0695.

Imperial Theatre, 1430 Bleury St. Earl Wilson's *Let My People Come*, Fri., Sat., 7:30 p.m. & 10 p.m.; Sun., 8 p.m. Tickets, $10, $12.50, $15, at the Theatre box office. 288-7102.

Centaur Theatre II, 453 St. Francois Xavier St. in Old Montreal. Pauline Le Bel, in a musical cabaret-style production of *Piaf*. Tickets on sale at the box office. 288-1229. Fri. & Sat. 8 p.m. Sun.; 7 p.m. matinees Sat. 2 p.m.

Town Stage, 12001 De Salaberry Blvd., Dollard des Ormeaux. *1984*, adapted for stage and directed by David Rimmer. Cast includes: Arne Ovstaas, Rebecca Dewey and Tony Nardi. Tickets $3.75; students and senior citizens $2.25, at the box office.

The Actors Studio 7050 Victoria, Rm. 210. Two one-act plays by Arthur Kopit, *Questioning of Nick* and *Chamber Music*. Sat., 8:30 p.m. 342-4591.

St. Bruno Players, present *Cactus Flower*, a comedy written by Abe Burrows, directed by Philip Booth. Sat., 8:30 p.m. MacDonald-Cartier High School, 7445 Chambly Rd., St. Hubert.

FRIDAY

MUSIC

McGill Faculty of Music — Olga Gross, pianist, performs work by Scarlatti, Beethoven, Chopin, Ravel & Bartok. Pollack Concert Hall, 555 Sherbrooke St., W. Free admission. 392-8224.

Cafe Timenes presents the jazz band *Nebus*. Shows: 9 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. Tickets $2.50. 4857 Parc Ave.

Liberace will perform at Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier. 8 p.m. Tickets $5 to $13.50, on sale at the Place des Arts box office.

Montreal International Violin Competition. The third day of the second elimination round takes place at 1 p.m. & 8 p.m. Free admission. Theatre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts.

LECTURES

Integral Yoga Institute presents a slide and lecture show on yoga of the daily life and yoga retreats. 7:30 p.m. 5425 Parc Ave. 279-8931.

FILMS

UNICEF—Quebec presents a series of free films Fri. noon to 3 p.m. all year at the Mini-Theatre in Le Viaduc, Place Bonaventure. 866-8013.

REPERTORY

Cinema V (489-5559) Lord of the Rings, 7, A Perfect Couple, 7:15, Quintet, 9:15, Richard Pryor Live in Concert, 9:45. The Rocky Horror Picture Show, midnight.

Outremont (277-4145) Yessongs and tour ecartille, 8, Sonate d'automne, 10.

Seville (932-1139) Interiors, 7, Warriors, 9:30, Animal House, midnight.

Cinematheque Quebecoise (844-8734) Les Aboiteaux, L'Etang, Les Petites, Telesphore, 7:30, Les Brules, Les Mains Nettes, Les 90 Jours, 9:30.

Cinema Place Victoria (288-7313) Utamaro's World, 5:15 & 9:35, Caravans, 7:20, Pink Floyd, 11:45.

SATURDAY

MUSIC

South Shore String Association. Annual Spring Concert, 7:30 p.m. Polyvalent de Beloeil, 725 de Levis in Beloeil. Program includes: Violinand chamber music, solos and the Monteregian String Orchestra.

Cafe Timenes presents the jazz band *Nebus*. 4857 Parc Ave. Shows at 9 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. Tickets $2.50.

DANCE

Ecole de Ballet Jazz Francine Gelinas at The Expo Theatre, presents *La Danse de Fete*. Tickets at Ecole Ballet-Jazz Francine Gelinas, 1700 Sagar Rd., between 4 & 9 p.m., Mon. to Thurs. 374-5493 or 721-4655.

Qui Danse Final performance of the season. 8 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. Louise Lapierre School of Dance. 1460 Mt. Royal, E. Suggested donation $3.

ETCETERA

Jewish Public Library celebrates its 65th anniversary. 8 p.m. Opening remarks by the President, greetings, reports, election of new administration, and a musical program. Library auditorium, 5151 Cote St. Catherine Rd.

KIDS

Creative Drama for Children — ages 5 - 8 & 9 - 12. Self-expression through Creative Drama and Puppetry. Theatrical exercises,improvisation, puppetry, ventriloquism and original production, until July 21. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. 282-0672.

REPERTORY

Cinema V (489-5559) Lord of the Rings, 7, Movie Movie, 7:15, Murder by Decree, 9:15, National Lampoon's Animal House, 9:45, Richard Pryor Live in Concert, midnight.

Seville (932-1139) The Rocky Horror Picture Show, 7, Interiors, 9:30, Warriors, midnight.

Outremont (277-4145) Yessongs and Tout Ecartille, 8, Sonate d'automne, 10.

Cinema Place Victoria (288-7313) Pink Floyd, 1:15 & 11:45, Caravans, 3 & 7:20, Utamaro's World, 5:15 & 9:35.

SUNDAY

MUSIC

Mozart's Coronation Mass will be performed by combined Cathedral Choirs and Orchestra, celebrating Eucharist, directed by Gerald Wheeler. 10 a.m. Christ Church Cathedral, University & St. Catherine Sts. Free admission. 288-6421.

Choral Concert — presents the Ron Am Choir of The Jewish People's School and Peretz Schools, under the direction of Yehuda Vineberg. 7:30 p.m. 555 Sherbrooke St. W. The Sabra Dance Group, Andre Sandor bass soloist and Henry Renglish piano. Tickets at Pollack Hall box office and Jewish People's School & Peretz Schools, 5170 Van Horne Ave. 737-3560.

Carillon Festival Once a month, until September, carillonneurs from Canada, the United States and Europe are invited to give recitals onthe Paccard carillon of St. Joseph's Oratory. 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Free admission.

Lakeshore Evangelical Church presents The King's Kids, an 18-voice childrens' choir. 7 p.m. Lakeshore Evangelical Church, 470 Brookhaven Ave., Dorval.

Les Concert Lachine Mozart program for string quartet and flute. 8 p.m., Vielle Brasserie, 2801 St. Joseph's Blvd. Lachine.

ETCETERA

Widowed Group of United Synagogue, Eastern Canada Region, Young Women's Hebrew Association and The Catholic Community Services are sponsoring a workshop, *Grieving Children*. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Admission $2. 1857 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. 5th floor. 48404415.

FILMS

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts presents *Montreal*, a 55 minute, color film produced in 1978 by Claude Godbout. Maxwell Cummings Auditorium, 3 p.m.

LECTURES

La Pensee Sauvage will hold its third lecture, 2 p.m. This week's topic is Religion and Atheism. Bandstand in Mount Royal Park opposite Duluth Ave. 486-1724.

First Church of Christ is sponsoring a free lecture entitled Something to Depend On, by Ruth Jenks. 7:30 p.m. Corner of Dr. Penfield and Cote des Neiges Rd.

KIDS

Cinema Parallele presents films for children every Sun., 2:30 p.m. Free admission. 843-4725.

REPERTORY

Cinema V (489-5559) Lord of the Rings, 7, The Brinks Job, 7:15, Murder by Decree, 9:15, Richard Pryor Live in Concert, 9:45.

Seville (932-1139) Modern Times, 5, Interiors, 7, Warriors, 9.

Outremont (277-4145) Va Voir Maman, Papa Travaille, 7:30, Sonate d'automne, 9:30.

Cinema Place Victoria (288-7313) Caravans, 1:15 & 7:20, Pink Floyd, 3:30, Utamaro's World, 5:15 & 9:35.

Richard lacks sense of real comic relief

By MAUREEN PETERSON
of The Gazette

STRATFORD FESTIVAL

STRATFORD, Ont. — Nicholas Pennell opened at the Avon Stage here this week in the first of three Stratford Festival productions of Shakespeare's Richard II.

Rod Beatie was a somewhat shrill Bolingbroke, a role as demanding, though not as rewarding, as that of the king whose crown he usurps.

It is a long play and one in which certain dramatic excesses often result in accidental comedy, such as the scene where half a dozen lords throw down their gloves at each other as challenges.

In this first of three productions directed by Zoe Caldwell, there was little sense of genuine comic relief and a preponderance of geometric tableaux that added unwelcome weight to the first scenes.

Marti Maraden plays Richard's queen with an accent intended to sound French, but which seemed more Scandinavian to me.

Her performance was otherwise satisfying, as were those of Eric Donkin as the Duke of York, and William Needles as John of Gaunt and Bishop of Carlisle.

Richly colored

Daphne Dare's set is as geometric and neo-classically austere as her costumes are richly colored and ample.

Frank Maraden and Stephen Russell will play Richard again, with Jim McQueen and Craig Dudley as their respective Bolingbrokes.

Wilfrid Dube (Bushy) and Marti Maraden (Queen Isabel).

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